



January 20, 2017

The Honorable Governor John Bel Edwards  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Re: K-12 Public School Funding Cuts

Governor Edwards,

I'm writing today on behalf of 20-thousand public school employees across Louisiana with great alarm regarding the pending proposal by Representative Lance Harris to balance the budget on the backs of Louisiana's most vulnerable citizens. His cuts to healthcare, citizens with disabilities, and most importantly, Louisiana's K-12 schools, are extremely concerning to me as a public school teacher.

Included in Harris' plan is a direct cut of nearly \$30 million to Louisiana's K-12 public schools for this fiscal year. This cut is in addition to the recent \$24 million hit absorbed by our schools in this year's budget, bringing the total cuts to public schools from the prior year to \$52 million. Such a drastic decrease in funding will have a detrimental impact on every classroom in Louisiana as these dollars are essential in providing direct instructional services to students, implementing higher learning standards, and maintaining vital special education services.

In the nearly 40 years I spent teaching, I felt, first-hand, the toll that financial cuts take on a school. Programs are eliminated. Classroom sizes grow. Critical student subject matter is sacrificed. Jobs are lost. Buildings go unrepaired. Transportation suffers. Extra-curricular activities are eliminated and after-school programs are suspended. This is just the tip of the iceberg. We cannot wreak this much havoc on our schools, communities, and most importantly, our children.

I bring all of this to your attention, not just as a plea for help, but as a promise to aide you in convincing the Louisiana Legislature that these cuts are unacceptable. I stand by your side in this matter and pledge my commitment to this battle.

Thank you for your leadership on this and all matters facing Louisiana. I am encouraged by your resourcefulness and desire to work for the people of this great state.

All my best,

Debbie Meaux  
President  
Louisiana Association of Educators

